CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 28 APRIL 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE ACTING HEAD OF DELEGATION OF CHINA TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING A JOINT PRESS COMMUNIQUE ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE ABM TREATY

On 14 April 1999, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, G.E. Mamedov, and the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Wang Guangya, held consultations on issues of strategic stability in Moscow. After the consultations, the two sides issued a joint press communiqué on issues related to the ABM Treaty.

We would be grateful if you would issue and circulate the joint communiqué as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed) Vasily S. SIDOROV
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative
Head of Delegation of
the Russian Federation
to the Conference on
Disarmament

(Signed) WANG Xiaoyu
Acting Head
of Delegation of China
to the Conference on
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Russian-Chinese press communiqué on consultations on issues related to the ABM Treaty

In accordance with the agreement reached between the Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation and Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China on 25 February 1999, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, G.E. Mamedov, and the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Wang Guangya, held consultations on issues of strategic stability in Moscow on 14 April 1999. Military and diplomatic experts from both sides participated in the consultations.

Particular attention was devoted to discussion of the situation developing in relation to the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (the ABM Treaty). The discussion of this problem was based on the understanding set out in the joint statement entitled "Russian-Chinese relations on the threshold of the twenty-first century" issued on 23 November 1998 at the end of the Russian-Chinese summit meeting, concerning the critical importance of preserving and strengthening the 1972 ABM Treaty, which was and remains a cornerstone of efforts to maintain strategic stability in the world.

The two sides voiced their grave concern at the fact that plans announced in the United States to prepare a national anti-missile defence system for deployment are currently posing a serious threat that the ABM Treaty may be undermined. The implementation of such plans would constitute a violation of a fundamental obligation under the ABM Treaty - the obligation not to deploy ABM systems for the defence of national territory and not to provide a base for such a defence.

The two sides consider that the undermining or violation of the ABM Treaty would lead to a series of negative consequences: the emergence of new factors which could destabilize the international situation both at the global and at the regional level, and of conditions for the resumption of the arms race and for the creation of additional obstacles to the process of disarmament.

In the developing situation, Russia and China consider it necessary to draw the attention of the international community in the most serious manner to the consequences which might result from a violation of the ABM Treaty.

On the basis of its traditional interest in supporting strategic stability and strengthening international security, China, which is not a party to the ABM Treaty, declares its solidarity with the efforts being made by Russia to prevent the Treaty from being undermined or circumvented. Russia, for its part, fully supports China's efforts to enhance international and regional stability. The two sides express their concern that the realization of the existing plans for the creation and deployment of an ABM system by a number of countries in the Asia and Pacific region could cause an increase in tension in areas of conflict in that region.

The two sides declare their readiness to continue in the future, as the situation develops, to discuss and cooperate in respect of issues related to the preservation of the ABM Treaty, as well as associated problems.

Moscow, 14 April 1999

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